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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Rural Electrification Administration

August 12, 1949

P R E S S D I G E S T

A Sample of Newspaper Stories and Comment Regarding
Rural Electrification Program

TWO U. S. MOVIES
BANNED IN YUGOSLAVIA

From Washington Evening Star, March 16.

Yugoslavia last night refused to permit the United States Information Service to present two documentary films portraying American progress in rural electrification.

Six hours before the scheduled exhibit the Yugoslav Ministry of Foreign Affairs notified the American Embassy of the ban, but volunteered no specific reason for its imposition.

THE ELECTRICAL REVOLUTION

From Lake Mills (Iowa) Graphic, March 30.

Figures given out at the Winnebago County Rural Electric Cooperative meeting last Wednesday reveal the almost unbelievable growth in the application of electrical energy to farm living and working conditions.

In January the members of the Winnebago County co-op used an average of 300 kilowatt hours of energy!

That is about $2\frac{1}{2}$ times as much electricity as was used in the average Lake Mills home during the same month.

SHOWS EXPANSION
OF RURAL ELECTRICS

From Grand Forks Herald, March 15.

By late 1950 or early 1951, 80 percent of North Dakota farms will be electrified under loans already approved by REA, William J. Neal of Washington, Deputy REA Administrator announced Monday afternoon at the Seventh Annual Meeting of the Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc., of Grand Forks.

Emphasizing that North Dakota and Minnesota were among the top 10 states in the nation receiving REA construction contracts in 1948, Neal reported that the construction of distribution lines in both states in the last six months of 1948 averaged 700 miles a month.

This rapid expansion is made possible to a large extent by low-cost reclamation power now available in the western half of North Dakota from the Fort Peck Dam, the speaker explained, and when low-cost reclamation power is available throughout the state, North Dakota farms are expected to be practically 100 percent electrified.

The availability of reclamation power may cut the cost of electric power to farms in this area in half, if the power is properly integrated with the Minnkota system, Neal remarked.

RURAL ELECTRIC CO-OP GROUP CHARGES
17 UTILITIES AIDED LOBBY FUND

From New York Times, June 19.

The first sign of a swift offensive against the utility industry's new program of "aggressive defense" came yesterday when the cry of "power trust" was revived by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

The spokesman for this arch-enemy of private power, Clyde T. Ellis, Executive Manager, who also is a former Representative from Arkansas, made the charge in reciting a story of alleged contributions by seventeen private utilities to the lobby fund of the National Tax Equality Association.

It was part of his answer to the private utilities' recent announcement that it planned to stop the growth of public power. At their convention in Atlantic City, earlier this month, several power and light company executives said the industry was going to the "grass roots," business and Congress to apprise them of the "trend toward nationalization through power" and the "unfair tax subsidies enjoyed by public power at the expense of the taxpayers."

Mr. Ellis' retort to these statements included the observation that when the utilities get to the "grass roots" they are going "to run into simple facts that people can understand." He listed these facts as the unavailability of electric power, excessive rates charged by the private utilities and limitations on business expansion because of power shortage.

"We welcome the shift of their attack from statistics that can confuse and mislead people away from realities that anyone can see and understand," he declared, adding that the new thinking in the industry was "nothing more than a coming out into the open with the old assault."

He then made the allegation of utility companies' financial support of the NTEA, saying that the tax lobby organization received most of its funds from the "private power trust." He said the NTEA's recent registration in Washington as a lobby organization revealed "vivid evidence of the sham which has been practiced on Congress and the American public since 1943." This, he declared, was one of the "undercover" ways in which the utilities have been operating for the last six years.

REA STRESSES RISING USE
OF TWO-WAY RADIO BY ELECTRIC CO-OPS

From Mobile-Safety Radio Reports
June 17, 1949

Steadily increasing use of two-way radiotelephone systems by rural electric cooperatives, particularly important to the co-ops because of the extended areas in which they operate and the lesser availability of landline telephone facilities in some of the isolated rural areas, is shown in a tabulation made available to MOBILE-SAFETY RADIO REPORTS this week by the Rural Electrification Administration.

The REA said that 460 co-ops already have two-way radio systems in operation, under construction, or with construction authorized. The agency said 273 expect to have their equipment within a year.

GREAT REA ADVANCES NOTED

From Aberdeen (S. D.) American News,
May 16.

A tribute to the contributions which the local group operating REA-financed power systems have made toward improvement in farm living standards and production methods was paid Monday by Albert Hauffe, Leola, President of the South Dakota Rural Electrification Association.

The occasion of Mr. Hauffe's statement was the 14th anniversary of the establishment of REA, on May 11, 1935. For farmers in South Dakota, this 14-year period has produced a great technological revolution on their farms, Hauffe said.

South Dakota's farmers have added thousands of dollars to their incomes through the profitable use of electricity on their farms, Hauffe stated. In particular, the use of electricity to modernize dairy farming and poultry raising has improved the quantity and quality of farm production and has increased farm income.

"Application of electricity to farming and farm living is only starting," Hauffe declared. "Too few of our farms have electric water systems and bathroom facilities. We know that the farmer has not yet developed the full potentialities of the use of electric power in his farming operations. More research and study by all concerned is needed to advance this power use on the farm."

FARM POWER AID SPEEDED

From The Grand Rapids Press
June 20, 1949

With government help, rural America is lighting up at a record pace.

About three-fourths of the nation's farms have ~~electric~~ service now, compared with slightly more than two-thirds a year ago, says Rural Electrification Administrator Claude R. Wickard. Only 11 percent of the farms had electricity in 1934.

Wickard predicted the electrification would be stepped up even faster in the next 12 months. By mid-1950, he said, about four out of every five farms will have electricity.

"The big power companies are not really getting out into the thin territory," Wickard said. He said three out of every four farms electrified in recent years have been connected to government-financed lines.

SOUTH GEORGIA GETS
LOWER POWER RATE

From Atlanta Constitution July 15, 1949

More than 26,000 South Georgia rural users of electricity were assured an adequate supply of electricity yesterday when REA Administrator Claude Wickard approved a three-way contract providing power at cheaper rates to six REA cooperatives in the area.

The new contract provides the means of electrifying the whole rural area, according to Valene Bennett, President of the Georgia Electric Membership Corporation, who has fought for years for more adequate power supplies into the area.

Under a five-year agreement, the Georgia Power Company will "wholesale" electricity to the Georgia Power and Light Company at Valdosta, which in turn will distribute it to the six cooperatives at 12 delivery points.

Charles Collier, Vice President of the Georgia Power Company, said yesterday the cooperatives will get electricity from the Valdosta utility, a private concern, at a rate of 7.75 mills a kilowatt hour.

"That's quite a savings from the 1.1 to 1.5 cents they had previously been paying," Collier said.

The 1.25-mill difference between the Power Company's wholesale price and the Valdosta firm's "delivery" price will just cover the loss in transmission of power, he added.

For the 26,000 rural power customers, the newly-approved agreement meant a sufficient supply of power for the first time, power company officials said. The cooperatives previously have been supplied by the Georgia Power and Light Company alone.

Bennett, who also is head of the Satilla REA at Alma, said the contract would be the means of reaching people farther away from the lines. He added it would also hold the promise of a better backing of the Government investment.

DAWSON COUNTY PUBLIC
POWER DISTRICT LEADS

From Lexington (Nebr.) Clipper, June 10.

State Auditor Ray C. Johnson said Wednesday Nebraska's 22 rural power districts last year supplied electricity to 40,910 farm homes over 18,810 miles of line.

For the power sold in 1948 the districts received \$3,319,758 and operating costs, including interest, were \$2,927,147.

ELECTRIFICATION TO ISLAND OFF
HANCOCK COUNTY COASTLINE

From The Bangor (Me.) Daily News
April 20, 1949

The \$126,000 Rural Electrification Administration program authorized by the Government for the building of a generation plant and distribution lines over some 27 miles on this island, including the towns of Swans Island, Atlantic and Minturn, will get under way shortly, P. Jack Whitehill, manager of the recently-incorporated Swans Island Electric Cooperative, said today.

There are some 240 homes in the three towns on the island, 40 being summer residences, and the entire island was surveyed last December by William P. Bauer, field representative in New England for the REA of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. It is hoped that at least 85 percent of the residents will become members.

The island, off the coast of Mt. Desert, is too far out to be serviced from the mainland and the proposed plant would have two diesel engines, one being used as a spare.

It is hoped, Whitehill said, to have electricity by late summer and people of the island have expressed their willingness and true Yankee spirit, to "dig in and help set poles and cut brush" that the program might be speeded up and also cut down on overall expenses of the entire project.

CLEAR FOR PLANT SITE

From The Quincy (Ill.) Herald-Whig
Tuesday, March 8, 1949

The first shovelfull of dirt for the new \$9,000,000 power producing plant which will furnish electrical power to REA members in four Missouri counties and the Bloomfield (Ia.) co-op, was turned Monday morning by President R. D. Pennewell of the Northeast Missouri Electric Power Cooperative.

The ground breaking ceremonies were held at the site of the new power co-op building on the bank of the Mississippi River, seven miles north-east of here.

HOLE FOR REA POLE DISAPPEARS;
FOUND IN COMFORT STATION

From Mont Rose (Colo.) Daily Press
April 22.

Last fall, when work was stopped on the rural electrification project into Cimarron, wherein holes were being dug and poles set in order to provide electrical service for farmers and stockmen in that area, winter weather forced the crew to cease operations until spring. The hole diggers naturally were ahead of the pole setters, and there were several holes dug that the pole setters did not get to because of a shortage of poles.

Right in the town of Cimarron, an extra large eight-foot hole was dug to accommodate a large pole, where the line was to be strung in two different directions, and guys were put in to hold the large pole when it arrived and was set in place.

The crew resumed operations Thursday, and after trying to locate the hole, had to resort to surveying instruments, and discovered to their amazement that someone had built a Chick Sale structure over the hole for the convenience of the public.

Friday the digging crew was busy drilling a new hole nearby, as the one previously dug was not available for the REA lines.

BAYLES DESCRIBES COORDINATED PLAN
FOR REA IN STATE

From The Bismarck (N.D.) Tribune
Thursday, June 2, 1949

Rural electrification in North Dakota is due to make unprecedented gains during the next 10 years through a coordinated plan now in operation, Elmer Bayles, superintendent of production and transmission of electrical power of the Montana Dakota Utilities Co., told Bismarck Rotarians at a regular meeting Wednesday.

The plan, Bayles explained, embodies the cooperative of the various electric cooperatives, the Bureau of Reclamation and the utilities firm itself and will result in the furnishing of electricity to rural residents in this area at a cost no greater than if they were located on the doorstep of Ft. Peck Dam.

Mainstays in the program are the various REA cooperatives which now number 14 in this area. Eventually, they will be provided with power from Garrison Dam by the Bureau of Reclamation, Bayles said. However, Garrison power will not be available for several years and already many cooperatives have completed construction of transmission lines and others are nearing completion. During the interim, to provide immediate service, an agreement was worked out between the bureau, the cooperatives and the utilities firm under which cooperative lines

tied in with those of the Montana-Dakota system for transmission of power from Ft. Peck ~~Dam~~. Under the agreement, power is sold by the Reclamation Bureau to the cooperatives and delivered by the utilities firm.

The power company, Bayles said, acts as a "wheeling agency" merely delivering the energy purchased from the Bureau to the consumer over the network of REA and Montana-Dakota lines. In return, they are paid in kilowatts for the delivery service.

REMC RADIO UNIT
HURRIES UP REPAIR

From The Washington (Ind.) Herald
February 25, 1949

Two-way radio equipment installed by the REMC in the last year has demonstrated its worth time and again.

Major breaks in service used to require 12 to 16 hours to restore fully, and now most outages can be remedied within three hours at the most.

